

Fact Sheet

Bringing the vision of a restored Cootes Paradise and Grindstone Creek to reality is the mandate of RBGs' Project Paradise.

Today's degraded wildlife marsh bears little resemblance to the thriving Cootes Paradise and Grindstone Creek areas of the 1800s. Since 1934:

- 85% of the emergent marsh - 400 acres(165 hectares) - vanished.
- Only 70 acres(28 hectares) of healthy marsh are left.
- Only 4 of 21 species of submerged vegetation still exist.

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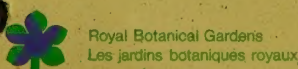
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In 1986, Environment Ontario and Environment Canada assembled a 48-person stakeholder group who created the Remedial Action Plan (RAP) for Hamilton Harbour - including a plan for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Restoration in the harbour and RBGs' wildlife sanctuaries in Cootes Paradise and Grindstone Creek.

Here are the primary goals for **Project Paradise** - the most ambitious, largest freshwater ecosystem restoration project ever undertaken in North America:

- Improve water quality
- Alter fish community from one dominated by species such as carp to a community controlled by top predators such as pike
- Provide spawning, nursery and adult fish habitats
- Recover lost wetlands, restore the aquatic plant communities and create habitats for shorebirds, waterfowl, reptiles and mammals
- Provide much-needed access to the waterfront and the restored wetland, via creation and enhancement of boardwalks and viewing towers, and 3,000 metres of trails
- Through the RBG Nature Interpretive Centre, programs and displays will help children and adults learn about the importance and impact of this milestone restoration of a Great Lakes natural treasure

This innovative venture will benefit the 47 million people living around the Great Lakes and vividly show what a proud, committed community can accomplish. A self-sustaining Cootes Paradise and Grindstone Creek will be a productive, living laboratory and a natural, healthy habitat again for waterfowl and wildlife.

Project Paradise has been entrusted to RBG, internationally recognized for more than 50 years of excellence in botanical preservation and education. Dedicated volunteers of RBG are now raising the **\$4 million** crucial to completing **Project Paradise**.

For more information call the RBG **Project Paradise** Campaign office at 527-1610.
Campaign Director - David W. Chambers,

